

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Sinclair Weeks, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Robert W. Burgess, Director

For release
October 10, 1958

ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL TRADE, SEPTEMBER 1958

Total sales of retail stores in September were \$16.3 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences was about one and one-half percent below August and two percent below September 1957.

The September sales figures are based on the Advance Report on Retail Trade, a monthly survey of the Bureau of the Census conducted in cooperation with a representative cross-section of about 1,700 retail firms which, in total, operate some 35,000 stores in the United States. The firms which are cooperating in the early reporting of sales are part of a larger group which furnishes figures at a later date. The advance estimates are preliminary and subject to revision, but the revision of the total seldom exceeds $1\frac{1}{2}$ percent.

The preliminary Census figures for September are shown in table 1 on the reverse side. The Office of Business Economics noted that after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, declines from August to September occurred at apparel, furniture and appliance, and department stores, groups which had shown sizeable sales increases in the earlier summer months. Final estimates for August indicate that seasonally adjusted retail sales were one percent above July.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES REPORT--PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES FOR SEPTEMBER 1958
 Table 1.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP
 (NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal factors and trading day differences)

| Kind-of-business group | Sales (millions of dollars) | | |
|---|-----------------------------|--------|------------------|
| | 1958 | | 1957 |
| | September | August | September |
| Retail stores, total ¹ | 16,324 | 17,000 | 16,373 |
| Durable-goods stores, total ¹ | 5,117 | 5,361 | 5,597 |
| Nondurable-goods stores, total ¹ | 11,207 | 11,639 | 10,776 |
| Food group..... | 4,071 | 4,360 | 3,937 |
| Grocery stores..... | 3,598 | 3,877 | 3,482 |
| Eating and drinking places..... | 1,316 | 1,406 | 1,291 |
| General merchandise group..... | 1,802 | 1,768 | 1,696 |
| Department stores..... | ² 1,063 | 1,013 | (³) |
| Apparel group..... | 1,012 | 954 | 1,010 |
| Furniture and appliance group..... | 850 | 872 | 852 |
| Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group.. | 1,288 | 1,279 | 1,238 |
| Automotive group..... | 2,535 | 2,789 | 3,078 |
| Gasoline service stations..... | 1,309 | 1,448 | 1,262 |
| Drug and proprietary stores..... | 534 | 539 | 515 |

See footnotes below table 2.

Source: Bureau of the Census

Table 2.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP
 (ADJUSTED for seasonal factors and trading day differences)

| Kind-of-business group | Percentage change, Sept. 1958 from-- | | Sales (millions of dollars) | | | | Percentage change, Aug. 1958 from-- | |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| | Aug. 1958 | Sept. 1957 | 1958 | | | 1957 | July 1958 | Aug. 1957 |
| | | | Sept. | Aug. | July | Aug. | | |
| Retail stores, total ¹ | -1.7 | -2.1 | 16,571 | 16,859 | 16,721 | 17,030 | +1 | -1 |
| Durable-goods stores, total ¹ .. | -1.3 | -10.0 | 5,147 | 5,214 | 5,221 | 5,740 | 0 | -9 |
| Nondurable-goods stores, total ¹ | -1.9 | +2.0 | 11,424 | 11,645 | 11,500 | 11,290 | +1 | +3 |
| Food group..... | | | | 4,152 | 4,216 | 4,057 | -2 | +2 |
| Eating and drinking places..... | | | | 1,255 | 1,247 | 1,278 | +1 | -2 |
| General merchandise group..... | | | | 1,918 | 1,879 | 1,861 | +2 | +3 |
| Apparel group..... | | | | 1,094 | 1,060 | 1,092 | +3 | 0 |
| Furniture and appliance group..... | | | | 891 | 851 | 897 | +5 | -1 |
| Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.. | | | | 1,178 | 1,118 | 1,144 | +5 | +3 |
| Automotive group..... | | | | 2,703 | 2,803 | 3,245 | -4 | -17 |
| Gasoline service stations..... | | | | 1,340 | 1,306 | 1,272 | +3 | +5 |
| Drug and proprietary stores..... | | | | 551 | 536 | 534 | +3 | +3 |

Source: Office of Business Economics

¹ Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

² Based on preliminary estimates supplied by Federal Reserve Board.

³ Comparable data not available.